



COSTAGUANA

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This is COSTAGUANA, a journal of postal Diplomacy and indigestible insouciance published by Conrad F. von Metzke, P.O. Box 27273, San Diego, CA 92128. Telephone (619) 276-2937. Work 'phone if needed, (619) 487-6384. Subscriptions: No thanks. Trades: Ditto. Game fees: \$7.00 for those not already on my mailing list, \$3.00 for others.

MY 'PHONE AND ADDRESS AND ALL THAT CRAP: I have been through a series of personal life-crises lately, all of which are either solved or on their way to solution. Ergo, you have had a confusion of addresses and 'phone numbers to deal with, and the net result of all this chaos is that I am right back where I started and intend to stay there. Some day I will explain. It is not really very interesting.

ENCLOSURE: Somewhere inside is a "quiz." It was given to me by my boss, and represents quite a bit of fun. See what you can do with it, and send me the answers for next issue. Best score gets a free game. If you don't want a free game, tough tiddle.

For future issues I have two more of these, not exactly the same but of similar character. The second of these two is a massive challenge: It is tough.

LAST ISSUE'S SILLY ENCLOSURE was something nobody could possibly identify. Its charm (if any) is that it is actually an official document of the U.S. Postal Service, prepared by me and used for a real purpose.

It represents the layout of mail delivery in a housing project serviced by the branch I manage. The long line down the center is a street: Avenida Villaha, San Diego 92128. The 5-digit numbers are the street numbers; the one- and two-digit numbers are the unit (= condo) numbers. The circles around four (usually) of the latter represent the mailbox pattern for the project; unit numbers enclosed within the same circle (oval?) share the same central mailbox. I made this chart for the purpose of setting up a delivery sequence for the area, and it was written on a scrap of paper attached to a clipboard as I actually walked up and down the street reading the mailboxes.

There are those who will say, "Well, no wonder the Post Office is such a mess." Actually, I think this shows the reverse: With the most rudimentary means I can take a problem and turn it into a problem solved; the developers of the project created a chaotic order of numbering and I reduced it to sensible levels by making the chart you saw and then using it to restructure the area's delivery. Delivery service to the project has been superb ever since.

NEW GAME: I think we need some advertising. Two players so far. That's the same as last issue. The problem is that since I won't trade with much of anybody, nobody knows we're here and won't list us. So:

To those few who know we are here, PLEASE MENTION US. I do not much want trades and subs, but I would dearly love five more players. I do now trade with four people, all reasonably influential. Can you help?

DELAYED MAIL DEPT.: Matt Johnston reports that the last issue took twelve days to arrive at his house! Possibly it's because I miswrote his street name, but I doubt it - unless Germantown is a hell of a lot bigger than I think it is.

Matt asks if maybe the deadline intervals could be expanded a bit? Well, I'm not sure at this point that this is anything more than a fluke. Let's keep going as we've been and see what happens. One very good possibility is that the issue may have looked to someone like third class: no envelope, stapled "newsletter" format, and (as I recall) no big bright first class slobbered all over the front.

But in any event...if any player ever has a problem like that again, drop me a note immediately and tell me. I have been known to extend deadlines before for good cause, and twelve days is rather good....

MEDICAL DEPARTMENT: I am currently fairly sick. Nothing serious, but I have completely lost my voice! Fortunately, this happened after the deadline, not on or before.

ONE SET OF MOVES this time was sent, believe it or not, by Federal Express. My God, you must be rich! And the screwiest thing about this particular delivery was that it, of course, came to the Sundance address I gave you that turned out not to be any good. So I called Federal and asked them to deliver it to my work.

They finally agreed - but it took a while to convince them that Federal Express could make a delivery to the Post Office!

CHANGE OF POLICY

I give up. A scattered few people keep asking to trade or subscribe, and I need to butter them up if I'm to get any advertisements for the second game. So:

TRADES: Yes, if all-for-all.

SUBS: At cost. Postage 20c. Paper free. Photocopy free.
Envelopes, when used, 1c ea., but screw that. Okay...
10 issues for \$2.00.

owing to complex constraints not worth explaining, my maximum mailing list is 38. Current circulation 13. Six slots reserved for players in the new game plus one more standby. Total available trades/subs, 19.

You figure it out.

WHAT DO THE FOLLOWING countries (past or present) have in common:

Liechtenstein; Labuan; Paraguay; British North Borneo; Austria; Western Ukraine; West Hungary; Fiume; Brunei; Poland; the U.N.; Sarawak; Romania; Nepal.

THISISALINEARSEPARATORDEMONSTRATINGTHEEXTRAKEYSONTHISSPANISHTYPEWRITER&N

WHITE-OUT DEPARTMENT: It's around here somewhere....

CUTE CRAP from my almost-five-year-old, frighteningly precocious son Ross:

1. Daddy: "Ross, have you ever heard of Mississippi?"

Ross: "Yeah, it's down at the bottom somewhere - right next to Alabama."

2. Ross was (heh-heh) "helping" me look through one of my stamp collectors' magazines, and we came to a display ad for the British Commonwealth headlined, "Elizabeth II Regina."

Ross: "Look, Daddy, she has the same first name as my Grandma Betty."

Daddy: "She sure does."

Ross: "And she has the same last name as Queen Victoria!"

YES, he's gifted. He can now - a month short of 5 - read the local newspaper except for technical language.

But if you're jealous because your kid isn't as gifted, stop and think a minute. Ross is bright and interesting and nice and cute and fun and....

But, he is also a serious discipline problem, verging on the hyperactive, socially a squib behind his peers - other 5-year-olds bore him, so he relates better to older kids or to adults, which is socially a bad scene - and very tough to find a school for (without being able to afford private academies).

In a different way it reminds me of what is often said to me about my height. (I'm 6'8".) Shorter people, usually men, will sometimes say, "Gee, I wish I had your height!" And my answer is, "Maybe you'd like to have some of my height, but you sure as hell don't want it all!"

Bright children, yes. But I wonder if maybe this isn't just a little much, for his own good....

And his goddamn 2-year-old brother is the same way!!!! HELP!

DON'T YOU GET SICK TO DEATH OF CUTESTORIES ABOUT PRECIOUS LITTLE JOHNNY (HE'S SO SWEET)?

1983AC - Fall 1902

We begin with the holdover press:

NAXOS (17 April 1903): The Imperial Headquarters for the Russian High Seas Fleet today reported that shelling of Constantinople had begun the previous night. Admiral Ivan "Toad" Boordmenko allowed himself to be interviewed aboard his flagship, the IWV (Imperial War Vessel) Revenge.

Boordmenko: We commenced bombardment of the Turk traitors at 9 p.m. last night with a barrage of egg shells....

Reporter: Eggshells, Your Excellency? Do they do much damage?

Boordmenko: Well, no, but they do make an awful mess. You have to think about morale problems in war, too. And these were rotten eggshells, you know. Some of them still full of rotten egg. We've had green slime dripping off the Haggia Sophia for hours now. We then switched to walnut shells, which we understand have caused many injuries among the enemy who are slipping in the slime and falling on the sharp shell pieces. Now, since dawn, we've been going at it with canisters of liquified pig fat. We've got the Porte drenched in it.

Reporter: Well, Your Excellency, considering the nonlethal nature of the bombardment, don't you feel perhaps your ships will be in danger from the shore batteries?

Boordmenko: Not at all. The Turks are lousy shots; the only target they're good at hitting is your back. Besides, with their gun crews all coated with liquid pig fat, they're really not doing well at

This test does not measure your intelligence, your fluency with words, and certainly not your mathematical ability. It will, however, give you some gauge of your mental flexibility and creativity.

Examine each of the following and identify what each acronym, phrase or abbreviation shows.

1. 26 = L of the A ****Sample**** 26 = Letters of the Alphabet.
2. 7 = W of the A W _____
3. 1,001 = A N _____
4. 12 = S of the Z _____
5. 54 = C in a D (with the J's) _____
6. 9 = P in the S S _____
7. 88 = P K _____
8. 13 = S on the A F _____
9. 32 = D F at which W F _____
10. 18 = H on a G C _____
11. 90 = D in a R A _____
12. 200 = D for P G in M _____
13. 8 = S on a S S _____
14. 3 = B M (SHTR) _____
15. 4 = Q in a G _____
16. 24 = H in a D _____
17. 1 = W on a U _____
18. 5 = D in a Z C _____
19. 57 = H V _____
20. 11 = P on a F T _____
21. 1,000 = W that a P is W _____
22. 29 = D in F in a L Y _____
23. 64 = S on a C _____
24. 40 = D and N of the G F _____